COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Meeting

Tuesday, March 4, 2025
5:00 PM
William J. Johnston Middle School BlackBox Theatre

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT : Chair Donna Antonacci, Vice-Chair Christopher Rivers, Secretary Margo Gignac, Alexander Oliphant, Michelle Millington, Rosemary Gignac and Stefanie Tracey-Calash.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT : Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Assistant Superintendent Jessica L. Kuckel, Bacon Academy (BA) Principal Amy Begué, William J Johnston Middle School (WJJMS) Assistant Principal Stacey Ewings, Colchester Elementary School (CES) Principal Judy O'Meara.

OTHERS PRESENT : Director of Finance and Operations Rachel Linkkila, Instructional Technology Coordinator Barbara Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent Alyssa Fratoni, Director of Educational Operations Andrew Barillari.

1. **MEETING OPENING**
   1.1. Call to Order
   Chair Antonacci called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

   1.2 Roll Call
   C.Rivers, D.Antonacci, M.Gignac, M.Millington and A.Oliphant present.

   1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

2. **RECOGNITIONS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**
   2.1. WJ Ambassadors

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2025 MAR -5 AM11:04
JAYLE FURMAN
TOWN CLERK

R.Gignac arrived at 5:02 PM.
S.Tracey-Calash arrived at 5:04 PM.

The WJ Ambassadors are 8th grade students who were nominated by a teacher and selected through an application process, with a focus on leadership, kindness, and inclusivity. They attend trainings and meetings and take an active role in organizing school-wide events such as Spirit Weeks, Veterans Day celebrations, and fundraisers. The team also leads Friday Forums and recently developed a student-created video game, which Board Member R.Gignac was able to play!

2.2. Board Member Appreciation Month
Thank you from our students and staff for your hard work and dedication to the schools.

3. STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS REPORT

3.1. Report from the Student Board Members

Nothing to report.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

4.1. For Public Comments, please see Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

There was a hand raised on the Zoom Meeting, however when called upon for their comment, there was no response.

5. *CONSENT AGENDA

5.1. *Approval of the new Non-Certified Substitute Pay Rate

Motion by: C.Rivers
Motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 5.1-5.7
Second: S.Tracey-Calash
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

5.2. *Approval of BOE Regular Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2025

5.3. *Approval of BOE Superintendent's Proposed Budget Meeting Minutes of February 19, 2025

5.4. *Approval of BOE Budget Workshop #1 Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2025

5.5. *Approval of BOE Budget Workshop #2 Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2025

5.6. *Approval of BA Spanish 3&4 to NY in May

5.7. *Approval of BA Senior Trip to RI in May

5.8. *Set Tuition Rate for the 2025-2026 School Year

Motion by: C.Rivers
Motion to set the tuition rate for the 2025-2026 school year at $14,500.
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

The Board came up with this figure by taking the total budget of BA and dividing it by the total number of students.

6. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

6.1. Budget Finance Committee

C.Rivers discussed the Monthly Budget Report for February 2025.

6.2. Curriculum Committee

Nothing to report.

6.3. Policy Committee

Currently tackling the 4000 Series, the next meeting is March 11, 2025.

6.4. Facilities Committee

The Committee approved the 2025 Capital Plan. There was discussion around an overhaul of BA in 2028 or 2030. C.Rivers thanked the custodians for maintaining BA to the best of their abilities. They are currently patching patches on the BA roof, there are buckets everywhere and leaks are dripping into light fixtures.

7. POLICY - SECOND READ

7.1. 3000 Transportation:Bus Drivers' Duties Policy
Motion by: C.Rivers
Motion to approve Policy Changes in 7.1-7.6
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

7.2. 3000 Transportation: Procedures and Bus Safety Policy
7.3. 3541.44 Transportation of Students by School Employees
7.4. 3541.5-F Request for Bus Stop/Route Changes Addition or Deletion Form
7.5. 3542.22 School Lunch Service Employee's Responsibilities
7.6. 3542.3 School/Lunch Service

8. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

8.1. Legislative Update

Two bills are currently under consideration. The first, in the Senate, is for AEDs. We have in the budget to purchase seven at an estimated cost of $17,000. This grant funding will allow the district to apply for support and offset next year's budget. The second, in the House, is support for a hold harmless provision. Additionally, a $500,000 reduction in ECS funding is expected for the upcoming year, with a proposal to restructure the foundation to establish ECS funding.

8.2. Digital Learning Night

Superintendent Sullivan stated his thanks to Barbara Johnson, Administration presenters and staff and students who participated in Digital Learning Night.

8.3. Postseason Athletics

Superintendent Sullivan highlighted the Girls Basketball, Girls Fencing, Boys Fencing and Boys Track teams for their accomplishments in their divisions at ECC's.

9. *PRIORITY DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

9.1. State Assessment Update & Upcoming Testing Window

Assistant Superintendent Kuckel stated that there is a testing window for 11th grade mid-March and a window at WJ and JJIS in May for State Testing.

9.2. *Healthy Food Certification
Motion by: D.Antonacci

Motion to accept Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Colchester Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. COMBINED FOOD AND BEVERAGE EXEMPTIONS - The Colchester Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met:
1.) The sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2.) The sale is at the location of the event; and 3.) The food and beverage items are not sold

from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales.

Second: M.Gignac
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

9.3. Capital Plan

Discussion was had around the Capital Plan. It is similar to last year's, with the addition of the portables at BA. Currently being addressed but unable to take off the list are the flooring at BA, the Sound Fields and the Theater at BA. Discussion around a BA 2030 Overhaul.

Motion by: C.Rivers
Motion to adopt the 2025 Capital Plan
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

9.4. *Superintendent's Proposed Budget / Adoption of Board of Education Budget

- Discussion around the Facilities Maintainer
  - Keeping down the costs in preventative maintenance. Keep a log starting in the new fiscal year of the "savings" of the preventive maintenance that was done by that position with a 6 month report to the Board on progress. Save vehicle purchase until more information is known about what is needed.
  - Stipend for professionally licensed maintainer.
- Discussion around Portables at BA
  - The only thing budgeted for from the Capital Plan is the Portables.
  - Postpone Portables to leave room in the budget for the Maintainer, but this would only offset for 1 year.
- Discussion around Solar
  - Anticipated selection within the next 12 months or so.
- Discussion around Pay to Play and Pay to Park
  - Trying to lower the price for families to pay, as it is very high.
  - Lower family cap for Pay to Play, people might not be comfortable to ask for help if they cannot afford to put their student in sports.
  - Reduce revenue we expect from Pay to Play and Pay to Park by $51,000.
- Discussion around Technology
  - There is a sense of inflated increase due to technology not being broken down by school.

Motion by: C.Rivers
Motion for the Board of Education to approve a 5.16% increase of $47,928,070 as our bottom line budget. This budget includes adding a Maintainer, removing the portables from the capital outlay budget and reducing revenue by $51,000 for Pay to Play and Pay to Park.
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

10. REPORT FROM SCHOOL LIAISONS

10.1. CES

PTO Trivia Night, money raised is going towards the Cardinal Carnival at the end of the school year, supplies for teachers and grade level programming. Read Across America is tomorrow.

10.2. JJIS

Nothing to report

10.3. WJJMS

Meeting with Assistant Principal Ewings and Teacher Leaders about the new schedule for next year.

10.4. BA

Parent Forum where Marquis Lawson from Youth Services was a guest speaker.

11. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION ITEMS

11.1. Next Regular BOE Meeting
April 8, 2025

11.2. Next Budget Meeting
March 11, 2025

12. PUBLIC COMMENT

12.1. For Public Comment, please see Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

- **Vince Rose, Shadbush Drive**
  - Mr. Rose stated that if the BA roof is leaking, all of the investments we make and made inside the building are at risk. He is looking forward to more discussion around the cross-disciplinary classes and agrees with the Board on lowering the cost of Pay to Play.
- There was a hand raised on the Zoom Meeting, however when called upon for their comment, there was no response.
- **Michael Dubreuil, Woodbine Road, via Zoom**
  - Mr. Dubreuil stated that he had questions around solar and travel stipends. He stated that the citizens were ripped off when it came to the Magnet School. He also stated that the Board has insincere intentions during their budget discussions.
- **Deanna Bouchard, Meadow Drive, via Zoom**
  - Ms. Bouchard stated that all money belongs to the taxpayers and that 74 cents of every dollar going to the schools is not a net positive. She stated that a lot of people are going to be hurting and to look in house at Central Office for savings.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by: M.Gignac
Motion to adjourn.
Second: S.Tracey-Calash
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

Chair Antonacci adjourned the meeting at 6:58 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Afratoni

Alyssa Fratoni, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent